



Leighton Buzzard Canoe Club

LOW LEVEL CONCERN POLICY

Welfare Statement

Leighton Buzzard Canoe Club is committed to ensuring the welfare for all children, young people and adults taking part in canoeing are able to do so protected and kept safe from harm.

Welfare refers to the overall well-being of children and young people, and adults encompassing their physical, emotional/mental health and supportive relationships. It also includes creating a culture that focuses on ensuring that all LBCC members participating in sports and physical activity have positive and safe experiences, free from any harm.

Recognising a lower-level concern

A *lower-level concern* is any worry, doubt, or sense of unease, no matter how small, that a child, young person, or adult may have been adversely affected (physically, emotionally, or psychologically) by:

- The behaviour or actions of another person
- A particular situation
- An incident or interaction

Lower-level concerns are often not viewed as immediate safeguarding issues and may not meet the threshold for referral to statutory services such as the police or children's services.

While a lower-level concern may not appear dangerous or intentionally harmful at first, it must still be taken seriously. Without early recognition and action, such concerns can escalate and develop into serious safeguarding issues.

Responding to lower-level concerns

To keep children and young people safe, all lower-level concerns must be recognised, reported, and responded to promptly.

Everyone involved in sport including staff, coaches, volunteers, and committee members must understand that **all concerns, no matter how small, need to be addressed.**

If lower-level concerns are not reported or managed effectively:

- Concerning behaviour may not be addressed early enough
- Situations can escalate and cause greater harm
- Potential grooming or abuse may go undetected

While some lower-level concerns may stem from misunderstandings or a lack of awareness, other behaviours could be early indicators of intentional harm.

It is essential that everyone in sport feels able to raise and address lower-level concerns or even a sense of unease without hesitation. Early action can prevent harm and protect everyone involved.

Reporting a low level concern

Everyone has a duty to promote and protect the welfare of all club members, ensuring that they can take part in and enjoy our sport in a safe and supportive environment.

This duty applies to all concerns, whether they are serious safeguarding matters or lower-level concerns that may seem minor at first. All must follow guidance according to the **LBCC low level concern policy** and the **LBCC Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy**.

It is **not** your role to decide whether a situation is a safeguarding issue. It **is** your responsibility to pass on your concerns to the appropriate person. There is always someone you can speak to:

- Any LBCC core coach or official — they are obliged under this policy to pass the concern on.
- The **Club Welfare Officer** (Fiona Barber).
- At an event: the **Event Welfare Officer** or the event organiser.

All LBCC core coaches and officials hold a *position of trust* and therefore have a legal and moral duty to safeguard the welfare of children, young people, and

adults. They must follow the policies and guidelines in this document and pass on any welfare concerns to either:

- The **Club Welfare Officer** (currently Fiona Barber), or
- The **LBCC Chairperson** (currently Carly Hudson)

LBCC Club Welfare Officer has developed the **Recognise, Respond and Report Concerns visual (Figure 1)** This flow chart is a simple guide to help everyone in the club know what steps to take if they're ever worried about something or someone.

This visual was developed in consultation with junior club members and feedback from adult club members. A copy of this visual is displayed in the club house.

Reviewed by Club Welfare Officer
Fiona Barber

Date: 21-11-25

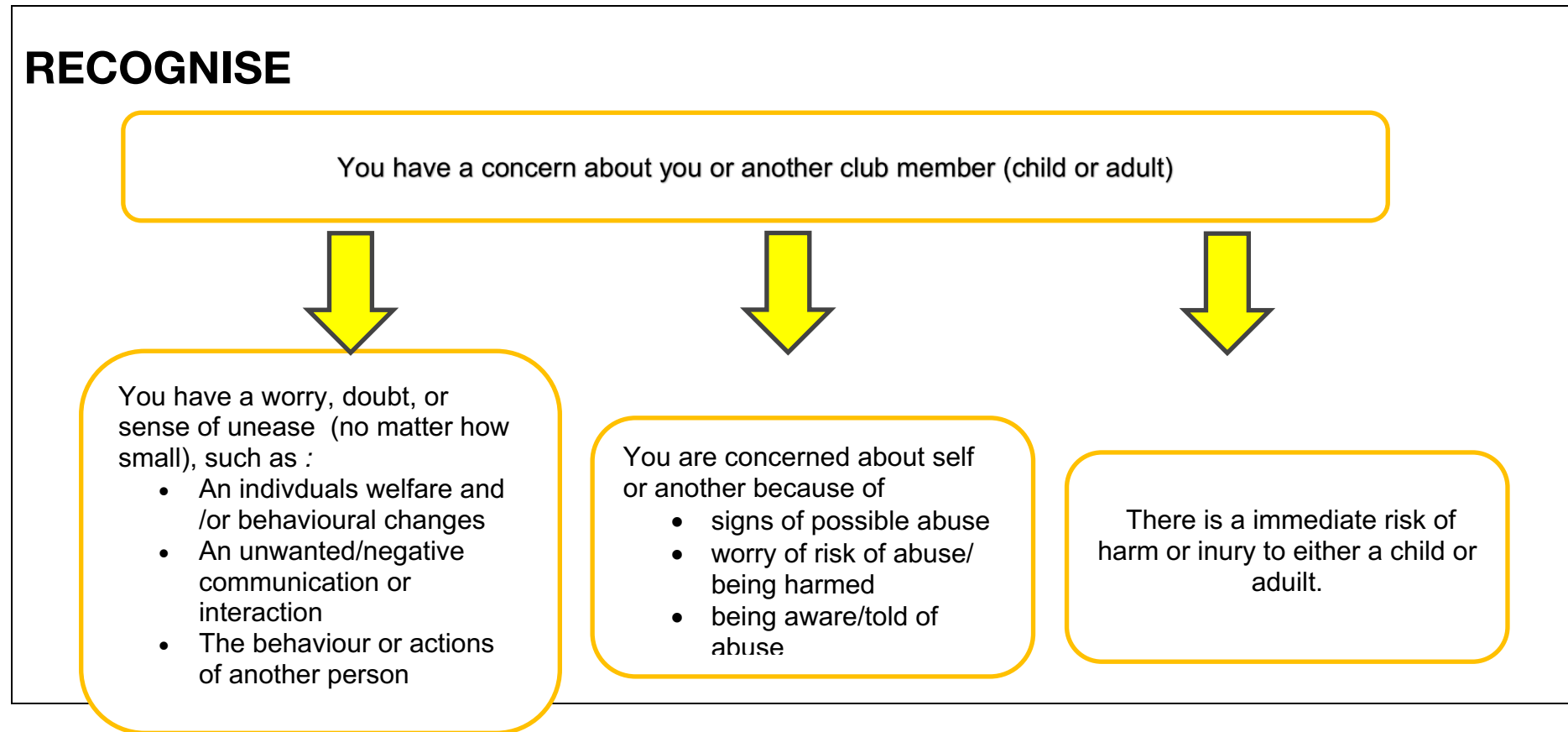
Approved by Chairperson
Nigel Dixon

Date 21-11-25

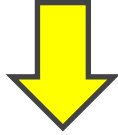
Review Date November 2027

Figure 1: Recognise, Respond and Report Concerns

This flow chart is a simple guide to help everyone in the club know what steps to take if they're ever worried about something or someone.



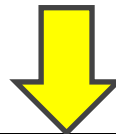
RESPOND



It is essential that everyone at LBCC feels able to raise and report lower-level concerns or even a sense of unease without hesitation. Early action can prevent harm and protect everyone involved.

⚠ It is essential that you pass on any information or concerns so that an appropriate safeguarding response can be taken to protect the safety and wellbeing of all our club members.

Call the emergency services (on 999 or 112) immediately to ensure the safety and protection of the individual



REPORT

**You can talk to a LBCC Coach / Instructor or Paddler Rep.
You can speak to your Club Welfare Officer or share your concerns in writing by email :
clubwelfareofficer@lbcc.org.uk**

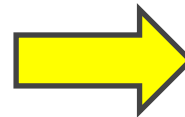


**Any report or concerns are passed on to the Club Welfare Officer confidentially.
You can trust the adults to deal with your concern and you do not need to share with others around**



What happens next ?

- All reports are handled confidentially and professionally
- The LBCC Club Welfare Officer will assess the situation, decide next steps and required action.



If you are still concerned?

Contact Paddle UK **01158655354**
NSPCC Help Line **0808 800 5000**
Central Bedfordshire Council
Safeguarding team:
0300 300 8585